

Ghost stories I've been told and weird stuff from my childhood Anonymous 08/28/12(Tue)02:41 No.10839209

My dad was born toward the end of WWII and grew up deep in the hills in the rural U.S. When I was a kid he would tell me this story of a wake he went to for an old lady who lived down the road.

When this lady died, her friends and family gathered in her house to mourn, celebrate her life, and divide up her belongings. In the south, when someone dies the whole community comes to their home with tons of food to try to comfort the family while they go about the business making arrangements and all that.

I think my dad was in elementary school at the time, and he was there in the livingroom of the house. It was a little two-story farmhouse on a hill, asphalt tile papering the exterior walls, woods on all sides, decent-sized family cemetery behind it. Anyway, all the neighbors were arranging food trays and congregating in the lower floor, while some of the family were upstairs in the bedroom going through the lady's belongings. My dad said he heard one loud thump, then a rhythmic clatter coming from upstairs, and the family came bolting down the stairs absolutely terrified. When asked what happened, they all said that the bed was dancing.

One day when I was a kid we were in the neighborhood visiting my grandparents, and my dad told us the story, and I happened to ask if the house was still there. He said it was and would show me on the way home. We left my grandparents' house and made a left turn about half way down the country road before the highway, over a creek and up a steep, winding hill into the woods. At the top of the hill was a newer house where the same family now lived, then the old farmhouse in front of the cemetery, vacant and looking like it would fall down any minute. I got a good look, and we turned around and headed back down toward the highway. As we left the hilltop, fascinated as I was with this creepy old house, I got one last look out the back window of our van. Maybe it was the sun setting through the woods, but I could

swear I saw a lantern light suddenly flash out of the top story window as we left.

My uncle, my dad's younger brother, lives at the end of the same road, even deeper into the same woods, even higher in the same hills. He is a bluegrass musician, and married a singer. It's a pretty talented side of the family, and my uncle and his (now ex-) wife could play just about any instrument either of them were handed. She told told their daughter, who later told me, a story about a flute (I assume a wooden recorder) she picked up at a flea market once. I was pretty young and don't remember all the details, but my cousin was always creeped out by the flute when she was a kid. One day when no one else was in the house, my aunt heard flute music coming from their home studio. She said she opened the door to see how this could've been happening, and the flute was floating in the air playing itself. She said she burned the flute after that. I never really believed this story and never saw any proof of it, but nonetheless I found it pretty unsettling as a kid.

One of my most vivid childhood memories: This same cousin, when I was eight years old, introduced me to the legend of Bloody Mary. She, I, my brother, and two other cousins, all of us within three years of the same age, were at my grandparents' house again. This was a house my grandfather had built himself shortly before my dad was born, and by the time I was around it was old and creaky, and pretty spooky in its own right, which I may get to later. It had a front livingroom and kitchen, then a long hallway leading to the rear sitting room, which was much larger but only used for special occasions. The hallway was pretty dark and secluded, so as kids we would go there to get away from our parents and tell ghost stories. Usually stupid ones we either made up as we went, or stuff we read in Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark, etc., and occasionally our younger cousins would get a little creeped out by these, but they were usually just good fun. This particular day we were getting a little bored with this level of creepy, and I challenged my cousin to tell us the scariest ghost story she knew. She just said "Bloody Mary," and two of my younger cousins who had heard this one before stood up and left

pretty enthusiastically. Now I was really intrigued.

After a decent amount of begging, I finally heard her version of the legend: a woman named Mary, who lived nearby, was in an accident and had her face severely mauled, and bled to death. This woman was known to be really vain in life, and took great pride in her long fingernails. If you stand in a dark room in front of a mirror, turn around eighteen times, and say "Bloody Mary" thirteen times, fully believing it would work, she would appear in the mirror. Then if you taunt her for her appearance or are otherwise cruel or threatening, she would come out of the mirror and carve up your face with her nails.

It took a lot of convincing and planning and dodging excuses, but I finally managed to talk her and the rest of my cousins and my brother into doing the ritual. There were five or six of us, my cousin who told the story and another female cousin, her brother, myself, my brother, and possibly our youngest cousin, who was a boy. We decided it would work best if the girls did all the spinning and chanting while the guys watched the door to make sure no adults would try to stop us.

Off of the hallway where we told stories was a very large bathroom with enough floor space for all of us, a big mirror in front of the sink, and a window which had been blocked off from the outside. The bathroom was nearly pitch black during the day with the lights off.

The large number of repetitions involved in the spinning and chanting built up tons of suspense. I was very skeptical but even more curious, having been presented with a way to prove once and for all whether ghosts existed or not. I was looking at the floor as they finished the thirteenth "Bloody Mary," and everyone was silent for a moment. I looked up at the mirror as I was saying "See guys it doesn't--" and then, I fucking swear to you, behind us, in the reflection of the closed bathroom door, was the image of a woman, about forty years old, with long black hair, her face covered in deep scars, deep black eyes down to the small glimmering point where a crack in the board blocking the window

allowed a little light to shine through, appearing for a brief moment, as sharp and clear as reality, and we all ran, out of the bathroom, through the hall, through the kitchen, through the livingroom past our parents, out the front door, down the porch steps, down the yard, across the road, finally stopping at the creek.

About my grandparents' house, most of it was pleasant enough. The front room was papered with old newspapers, which I guess was a country thing, and decorated with a mix of folksey crafts and some reproductions of paintings like Blueboy and Pinky, etc. The kitchen was warm and inviting, with a long table to accomodate most of the pretty large extended family. My grandparents had five kids altogether. The house was one story. One bedroom and two bathrooms were directly off the hallway, then two other bedrooms were off the sitting room at the back of the house, which was divided from the hallway with by a wood and glass door which could be locked with a skeleton key.

They only opened up the back room for holidays and big get togethers with the family or their church congregation, but sometimes we would go back there as kids to play and usually didn't get yelled at for it. The back end of the house was carpeted and decorated far more elaborately than the front. I remember there were big easy chairs and couches and benches, as well as a folding table and folding chairs stashed in a corner. There was a second fireplace where we hung our stockings for Christmas, and a door to the porch that ran the length of the house, but nobody was supposed to use it. I remember an old rotary telephone that worked sometimes, an accordion sitting keys up on a small table, maybe some taxidermy. There were windows on booth walls that went to the exterior of the house, but the back room always seemed darker than the front room.

Anyway, the very last bedroom, opening into the far corner of the sitting room, we were never, ever supposed to go in. The explanation for this was it was where my grandmother kept her sewing stuff and we should get into it and make a mess. The corner where the door to that room was was always cold, even

during the summer. The few times I do remember getting into that back bedroom, it was always cold. Even during the summer. I have no explanation for this. There was no refrigeration unit or anything. When I say cold, I mean there was frost on the mirrors. Even in the summer. The only other impression I remember from this room is it seemed to be blindingly bright, but a cold, white light, like fluorescent lights, during the day with the electric lights off, and everything was covered in sheets. I always got really yelled at for going in there, even when I was an older kid.

Sorry I'm running out of good ones.

Another cousin of mine, one of the boys from the Bloody Mary story about my little brother's age, told me about a well down the road that he thought was haunted. This cousin wasn't the brightest, and he was spooked really easily, which was a lot of fun. My grandfather, who didn't own a tv and had probably never been to the movies told us about this one time my cousin stayed up "watchin' the scary show," which I figured out was Nightmare on Elm St., and my grandfather had come over to their house that night and caught part of it, probably the part where Johnny Depp gets pulled into the bed, and waited until my cousin was asleep on the couch, hid at the edge of it, and reached a gloved hand over to wake him up in as cruel a manner as possible. He was the cousin we all did shit like that to.

Anyway, this well. He was really bad at making up stories, and said he heard two guys were fighting over whose property it was on or something, and one shot the other and dumped the body into the well, and it was haunted. We went to investigate this.

This well was about halfway to the highway, on the corner of the road leading to the house in my first story. This was about a quarter of a mile from where we stood, and we took our bikes up there. The well was in the middle of a meadow at the foot of the hill, with a creek separating it from the road and another branches of the creek on either side, with nothing else but grass and a few trees in this meadow.

Sure the meadow felt a little eerie. It was quiet and empty and pretty far from any houses, and I guess I could see how it would be hard to determine whose property it was on, but nothing weird happened and we didn't see a body or any ghosts, so after a while we got bored and decided to leave. I'm sure it was a trick of the light again, but as we were riding off on our bikes, I saw some kind of white shape in the trees that seemed to be following us until we passed the creek branch at the border of the meadow.

Oh I have one little one about my grandmother. I'm showing my age a little at this point.

Yeah my grandparents never owned a TV and didn't go to movies. They had a radio they mostly just used for news and weather, and read the local newspaper, which was mostly local human interest stories. They were pretty cut off from Hollywood culture and all that.

My family has kind of a weird tradition of getting each other off-beat, sometimes deliberately embarrassing or nonsensical Christmas gifts. For instance, one period for about four years my older brother and my uncle kept regifting each other this old pair of shoes, until my uncle got tired of it and gave my brother a jar of pickles with a staple remover taped to the lid.

E.T. had just come out the year of this story, and somebody thought it would be funny to get my grandmother, an adamantly anti-movie type of person, an E.T. doll. When she opened it and got a good look at it, she started crying and said it was "that thing that crawled in bed with me that night."

I think that's all I've got right now. Hope somebody was entertained. All of these stories are completely true or retold as told to me as accurately as possible, with no embellishment. Any inaccuracies or falsehoods would only be due to my faulty memory from things happening decades ago or due to the person who told me the story for the second-hand ones.